



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

character was made public from the most diverse sources; and the general love of the citizens attended him to the grave.

Pending nomination No. 394 was read.

No quorum for the enacting of laws being present, the special business of the evening was again postponed; and on motion of Mr. Foulke, the Secretary was instructed to give special notice of the fact to each of the members and request a punctual attendance at the next meeting.

The records of the last meeting of the Board of Officers and Members of Council were read.

On motion of Dr. Harris, the Committee on the Hall were instructed to place a new carpet on the hall floor.

And the Society was adjourned.

*Stated Meeting, December 2, 1859.*

Present, thirty-three members.

Dr. Wood, President, in the Chair.

The Hon. Wm. B. Reed was presented by Mr. Fraley.

The following donations for the Library were announced:—

Gould's Astronomical Journal. No. 129.—*From the Editor.*  
 Jour. Soc. Arts and of the I. in U. May, 1859. Lond.—*From the Soc.*  
 Das Astronom. Diagram; von Dr. Prestel, 1859.—*From Dr. Wilson.*  
 Academic Fallacies by H. Coppée, Phil. 1859. 8vo. p.—*From the Aut.*

The reading of Mr. Durand's obituary notice of Mr. Nuttall was postponed to the next meeting.

The death of Washington Irving, aged 76 (elected a member April 17, 1829), at his residence, Sunnyside, on the Hudson river, Nov. 28, 1859, was announced by Dr. Bache, and on motion of Dr. Elwyn, Prof. Coppée was requested to prepare an obituary notice of the deceased.

Mr. Dubois offered for the inspection of the Society, two of the golden images lately found in the Indian graves, at Chiriqui, in Central America. Both of them have been assayed at the Mint, and they are reserved as a part of the Mint Cabinet. The one of reptile form is

807 thousandths fine, and its intrinsic value is near thirty-five dollars; the bird is 627 fine, and worth nearly eight dollars.

Some interesting matters of fact may be deduced from these curious relics; which, from the small rings or loops attached to them, and from a consideration of the customs and superstitions of ancient heathen nations all over the world, may be believed to have been worn upon the person both as ornaments and talismans, and as such sacredly deposited with the owners upon their decease. We must assume that these images were manufactured before the Spanish Invasion, and they may belong to a high antiquity.

It appears then, that the ancient Indians were familiar with the mining and metallurgy of gold; and if not very elegant designers, could make quite respectable castings. They also knew the relative values of gold and copper; or they would not have troubled themselves to introduce copper so largely into these sacred emblems or images, and then covering it up with a pickled surface. For it must be observed that copper is not a natural alloy of gold, as silver is; yet we find in one of these specimens a large proportion of copper. And in a considerable quantity of these images, lately melted down at the United States Assay Office in New York, the proportion of the mass was 788 parts gold, 190 parts copper, and only 22 parts silver. Another curious fact is, that they were acquainted with the process of *pickling*, or biting out the alloying metals from the surface, so as to leave a golden exterior. This is specially observable in the reptile specimen; and many years ago, we noticed the same circumstance, in relation to similar images found in the mounds of New Grenada, and shown at the Mint; now in the collection made by the late Jacob G. Morris, Esq. As the ancient artists had no knowledge of the mineral acids, they must have employed certain native salts, such as sal ammoniac and the nitrate of soda, to produce the desired effect.

Central America is a gold-producing region, and formerly we received considerable quantities of gold from that quarter. It was always in artificial laminations, resulting from a process of parting the silver alloy; whence we infer that the gold naturally is considerably alloyed with that metal. The addition of copper is always of man's device; and with a judicious proportion of silver, as jewellers understand very well, a good gold colour is maintained.

The fact that all these images seem to be in the form of reptiles and birds of prey, real or fanciful, leads to the idea that they were meant to propitiate such creatures as were most likely to disturb the repose of the dead.

Mr. Peale presented at the same time for the inspection of the members, another gold image, the surface of which bore no marks of the pickling process, which had been in his possession many years, and may have been obtained from the same localities.

The Annual Report of the Treasurer was read; and that of the Committee of Publication postponed to the next meeting.

Pending nomination No. 394 was read.

The special business of the meeting was then taken up, and the amendments to the laws recommended by the Committee in their report read May 6, 1859, were adopted with some few exceptions, pending the discussion of which the Society was adjourned.

*Stated Meeting, December 16, 1859.*

Present, thirty-three members.

Dr. WOOD, President, in the Chair.

The following donations for the Library were announced:—

Journal of the Franklin Institute. No. 408.—*From the Institute.*  
 Medical News and Library. No. 204.—*From Blanchard & Lea.*  
 Journal Boston N. H. S. Vol. VII. No. 1. 1859.—*From the Soc.*  
 African Repository. Vol. XXXV. No. 12.—*Amer. Col. Society.*  
 Smithsonian Report for 1858. Sen. Doc.—*Hon. Thos. B. Florence.*  
 Cat. Library, Mass. Hist. S. Vol. 1, A–L. 8vo.—*From the Soc.*  
 Boston Pub. Lib. VII. Ann. Report. 1859. 8vo.—*From the Libr.*  
 Second Supple. to Index. Oct. 20, 1859. p. 8vo.—*From the same.*  
 Cat. Farmers' High School. Penna. 1859. 8vo.—*From Dr. Pugh.*  
 Prospectus Phila. and Europe. Steam Ship Co.—*From Cap. Randall.*  
 Quar. Journal Lond. Chem. Society. No. XLVII.—*From the Soc.*  
 De turcarum linguæ indole ac natura scripsit F. L. O. Roehrig.  
 Pamp. 30 pp. Philadelphia. 8vo. 1860.—*From the Author.*

The reading of the obituary notice of Mr. Nuttall by Mr. Durand, was postponed to the next meeting.

The report of the Finance Committee was read, and the